

# ANATHEMA

Volume II Issue X

Free

November 2016

## POLITICIANS ARE IN SEASON

The popular sentiment seemed to be that the populace was tired of the incessant, insufferable, caustic campaigning and couldn't wait for the elections to be over. At the same time, much was said about holding our noses while casting votes for one of those very candidates, whom nearly no one can stand, whom commentators suggest are likely to be impeached shortly upon assuming office, and who will assume command of armed forces that trample the landscape and its inhabitants.

Never before have I seen such a strong case for electoral reform, especially in the method of a "none of the above" box on the ballot to call for a new election with entirely new candidates. More to the point, however, it is an even better case against the entirety of representative democracy and the electoral system and for taking a concerted interest in our own lives and desires. Still, many local anarchists advocated participation in the voting spectacle, suggesting it is worthwhile to bow to governance and voluntarily forfeit freedom. *[continued on page 4]*

## THEY'RE TAGGING - WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Gentrification is a complicated process in which many different tiers of people and institutions are complicit. Some of the most visible initial gentrifiers are white punks, artists, radical types who themselves have been pushed out of the areas they previously could afford to live in. Some people are literally engineering and planning development and destruction from on high (for example, the University of Pennsylvania). Some people appear to own innocent small businesses, but are actually part of the social engineering project (for example, Omar Blaik, who was a silent backer of the gentry bar Clarkville). Some people appear to own innocent small businesses that just happen to be in highly contested areas of West Philly, but these people are actually really into the Confederate Flag (Nick Less, owner of Philly Homebrew Outlet).

An incident occurred in October in which some (white or white-passing) kids wandering around *[continued on the back page]*

## ACTUALIZE INDUSTRIAL COLLAPSE

The historic movement against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) continues to disrupt its completion in the Midwest. So much so that Obama is trying to propose a compromise, rerouting the pipeline elsewhere, disregarding the threat of water contamination in hopes of appeasing the American Indians and belittling their protest into a "Not In My Back Yard" position. In this way, the government seems intent on running away until they can find a less vocal locality to exploit, or is just patronizing the resistance before unleashing the full force of the military apparatus already brutalizing them there. Or, better yet, leaving it to Trump to herald insult, injury and death, as everyone is already certain he will.

Several major unions stepped up in response to the DAPL delays to demand the project go forward immediately, including the Teamsters and the IBEW, as it sends a bad message about "the future of infrastructure development in America." Clearly, their preference for wage *[continued next page]*

## IDENTITY POLITICS

A lot of people say they hate it, a lot of others are accused of partaking in it, a few come out to defend it. Despite all that, no one is really sure what identity politics are or are not. Trying to define it is mapping a terrain too vast to impose borders onto. I'm not going to try to confine it with a definition; rather, I'll trace some lines around things I've felt frustrations about that some would say are identity politics. All of these frustrations stem from my own experience journeying through places I'd be inclined to call identity politics. If my critiques don't line up with what you call identity politics, that's okay; what's important to me here is the critique of tendencies in the thoughts, conversations, and actions (or inaction) of radicals, more than dragging the phrase "identity politics."

I'm disgusted by the idea that because we're not at the top of the social ladder, we cannot and have no desire to do violence to the people and structures that harm and limit us. I'm also put off by the notion that *[continued on page 6]*



# WHAT WENT DOWN

October 9: Keystone United fascists skip out on their own celebration of Leif Erikson Day. Anti-fascists held a counter-demonstration.

October 19: UPS lockers in Queen Village were attacked with paint in a gesture of solidarity with the ongoing prison strike.

October 21: At least 100 black youth riot near Temple University, fighting police and students, and throwing rocks at cars. Four arrests took place.

October 24: Individual rips bronze rail from the entry stairs to the Union Club, *the* private club for wealthy elites in the city, causing additional damage to the stone work.

Late October: Individuals drove the same stolen Mercedes-Benz sedan to two smash-and-grabs - Tuesday at Boyds Philadelphia in Center City, allegedly netting \$45,000 in luxury clothing, and Thursday at a Macy's in Northeast Philadelphia, taking \$16,000 worth of Movado watches.

November 5: Fascists from the National Socialist Movement, the Traditional Workers Party, the KKK, and Keystone United hold a rally in Harrisburg, PA. Antifa holds counter demonstration lighting fireworks, throwing food and rocks at police, and barricading streets.

November 8: Anti-pipeline banner is hung in solidarity with #NoDAPL.

November 9: A protest against Donald Trump sets off fireworks, paints graffiti, burns the american flag, and vandalizes police vehicles.

November 15: A #NODAPL piece is painted on a freight train.

November 16: Protesters march through Center City against Trump and the police.

November 16: A banner is hung over the Vine St expressway in solidarity with #prisonstrike. ★

## [COLLAPSE continued]

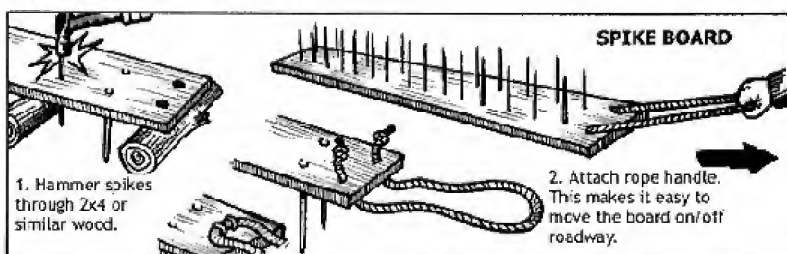
slavery and economic health outweighs the health of the workers, local residents and the rest of the earth's inhabitants in a addition to furthering an already callous disregard for Native American treaty rights.

Meanwhile, the same Sunoco Logistics that is heavily invested in the DAPL effort, and that runs a great deal of the local "energy hub" infrastructure (necessitating the largest oil train rail yard in the country in South Philadelphia, according to the Right To Breathe Coalition), had a pipeline burst elsewhere in the state and spill 55,000 gallons of gas last month. The spill occurred in the notably endangered Susquehanna River system (third most endangered in the nation, according to an NGO called American Rivers), further contaminating the drinking water of six million people.

This war on water has also recently targeted prisoners in Pennsylvania, including a particularly illness-susceptible Mumia Abu-Jamal. Likely attributed to a long history of coal mining throughout the state, the visibly filthy water in many local prisons has tested positive for a variety of carcinogens affecting the cancer rates of prisoners and local residents alike.

Of course, it's not just the water. Besides being exceedingly likely to develop asthma from the air pollution largely turned out by the largest oil refinery on the east coast, children in Philadelphia also have a higher rate of lead-poisoning than the scandal inducing Flint, Michigan populace that drew international attention earlier this year, according to a recent report on philly.com.

With growing extraction equipment installations, historically high rates of production, powerful industry lobbies fighting regulation, and societal values favoring the subsequent generation of capital, I am at a loss as to why we haven't put up much of a fight in opposing this system — interwoven as it is into our oppression while quite literally destroying us. Why haven't we begun blockading the Sunoco Plant in Southwest Philly, preventing the tractor trailers from entering? Why not throw spike boards beneath their slowly rolling wheels? Why haven't we used copper wire to send false signals on the railroad tracks, or better yet dislodged the tracks themselves and use fire, flares and blue flags as a new stop signal? Why haven't we taken the time to find the valves of the pipeline that runs through our own backyard and safely shut them off? Why not target those in charge of the death machines, a la Adinolfi? ★



## THE FIGHT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR

You know, it's been a weird few days. On Saturday, my friends and I were standing shoulder to shoulder in the streets of Harrisburg and staring at (through 3 police lines and barricades) an embarrassingly small turn-out by the National Socialist Movement, their network of White Nationalist groups, and affiliated Klan organizations. The Nazis made speeches to each other, completely drowned out by Antifa and other protestors. The few Nazi supporters or right-wing agitators that made themselves known were given the usual treatment and received the usual state protection. As the Nazis left, a spontaneous march formed and snaked through the streets of Harrisburg, splitting into several blocs. One cornered the NSM in a parking garage of a nearby hotel until riot police escorted them to safety, while the second wreaked a little havoc in downtown Harrisburg. It was so similar to so many



other days in my life in so many cities, with one exception: Towards the end of their demo, the Nazis unfurled one banner that had neither a swastika nor rune. A banner that read Trump.

As I write this on Friday, that seems like a long time ago. Donald Trump is going to be the next president of the United States. I will spare you my analysis as to the causes of this. There is plenty of that going around and I've never been much of a writer. No, this letter is to tell you that the fight you've waited for your whole life is here. In just 72 hours, already there has been a surge of violent racist, sexist and anti-GLBTQ+ attacks all over the country. The political establishment has already capitulated to Trump and his followers, because to do anything else questions the very system that legitimizes their power and wealth. Once again, there will be no liberal opposition to Fascism to be found beyond the realm of letters and the promise of the next election.

Donald Trump's presidency must be frustrated at every step. We must engage in sabotage of all avenues of capital. The regime-destabilization techniques used by U.S. imperialists must be altered and used for our aims. We will have to meet his Stormtroopers in the streets. We have to turn his base against him, yes, but we cannot be pushed to capitulating to the frustrations of middle class Americans, mostly white ones. Do not be fooled; most poor people do not vote. Felons and undocumented people do not vote. Most people who could have voted did not vote. Most people who voted did not vote for Donald Trump. The American Government has never been more de-legitimized in the eyes of "ordinary people." Something good could still come out of this, if we can avoid the hazards of co-option.

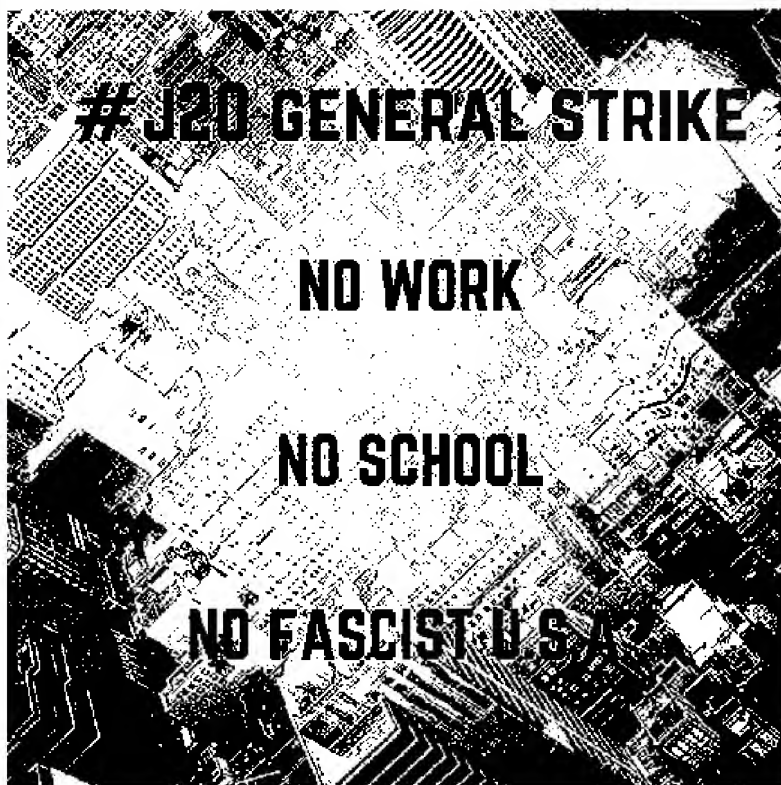
Inevitably, the movement against Trump that is already developing will come to a split between those who would defend Neoliberal Democracy and accept a return to it in exchange for somehow avoiding 4 years of Trump, and those who have seen enough of representative democracy and nationalism. I chose my side a long time ago. Settle for nothing but the complete overturn of this entire rotten society, the wholesale destruction of White Supremacy, Patriarchy, Colonialism and the keystone of it all, Nationalism.

If you are new to Anti-Fascism or getting back involved, there are some good resources to check out. The International Anti-Fascist Defense Fund provides monetary support to Anti-Fascists facing repression all over the world. TORCH Anti-Fascist Network functions for Anti-Fascist crews around the country to share information and resources and serves as a rallying/entry point for new recruits. I recommend Don Hammerquist's essay "Fascism and Anti-Fascism" as a good starting document, though (in my opinion) it is not without its faults and is in need of a 2016

update. "Beating the Fascists," "Physical Resistance," and "Militant Anti-Fascism" are 3 books about Anti-Fascism in Europe that may give you a preview of what is almost certainly to come.

More important, however, than the right theoretical background or even a well-established support network, is that we treat this as a new day and a clean slate. New people joining, old faces returning, and those who never left must approach each other in good faith and real love and solidarity if we are to survive. Anti-Fascism has been bogged down in the past by internal drama and schisms, as well as legitimate failures in regards to dealing with instances of sexual assault and relationship abuse within the movement, earnest political/tactical disagreements, mental health and state repression. We no longer have the luxury to make these failures and just go our separate ways or ignore the problem. This is a fight for survival.

We have a little over 2 months before the greatest surveillance state and most militarized law enforcement in the world are in the hands of a man controlled by Fascists, if not ideologically a Fascist himself (pretty irrelevant argument at this point anyway). To say nothing of the actual military that he will be in command of. Begin preparing today. Find your allies now. I will see you in the streets. ★





When the Democratic National Convention came to town last summer, the city was overrun with zealots campaigning for murderous authorities. Some even suggested that it was a feminist issue, wearing shirts that read, “a woman’s place is in the house and the senate.” As a result, there has been an uproar in multitudes of media trying to distance Hillary Clinton from feminist positions. However, as feminism is not inherently intersectional, it does not require broader critique of oppression beyond gender; and as it is most often not adorned with the prefix ‘anarcha-,’ it is not usually against the entirety of imposed authorities. For these reasons it would behoove an anarchist to be suspicious of any feminism that doesn’t differentiate itself from recuperable reformism, or even the reactionary transphobia of so-called “rad fems.” This is nothing new, however, as we will see.

Feminism is often conflated with patriarchy, suggesting that women running inherently oppressive systems is fine, as they are more egalitarian. Sad really, considering a history of feminism that begins with the utopian theorist Charles Fourier visualizing a vast transformation of society so exhaustively far beyond constructed gender roles that the earth would change with it, causing the oceans to change to lemonade; and early feminist theorists like Mary Wollstonecraft, who personally colluded with early anarchist William Godwin and sought an everyday liberation of desire that would incur condemnation from even today’s most progressive liberals.

That history also saw anarchist women like the Mujeres Libres of revolutionary Spain distancing themselves from the reformist tendencies of their contemporary feminists, and feminist icon Emma Goldman condemning the campaigns of the highly-celebrated suffragettes for opposing their own liberation. As Goldman said, “if voting changed anything, they’d make it illegal.”

Furthermore, the egalitarian social-systems of the past that some of us draw inspiration from were not really patriarchy, as they are often described. In *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan*, Fredy Perlman states:

*The name [patriarchy] is a cheap substitute for the experience. It is a bargain, and we’re always on the lookout for bargains. Once the name is on the door, the door can be closed. And we want doors to stay closed...*

*To know the name on the door is to know nothing. Knowledge begins on the other side of the threshold. Even the name on the door is wrong. Patri refers to mother, but archy comes from an altogether different age. Archy refers to government, to artificial as opposed to natural*

*order, to an order where the Archon is invariably a man. An-archy would be a better name for the door. The Greek prefix “an” means “without.”*

Feminism could be better realized as a gender abolition strategy, one that opposes any notions of normalcy, and never as the advocacy of different manifestations of authority being imposed on others. Manifestations that actually excuse and perpetuate the criminalization of and violence against black communities, and other marginalized peoples, like they have been by the Clintons (as was drawn attention to by such groups as Philadelphia’s REAL Justice Coalition when old Bill came to town).

### TERTIARY ORBITS

Meanwhile, third-party positions are, at best, parallels to the feminist-Clinton logic that advocates for more palatable control of our lives; they internalize and export the violence of our existence on to parties outside our immediate scope. We would do better to skip reforms in pursuit of liberation, since “efforts to create reforms...inevitably lead to more repression,” as Angela Davis stated in the popular new film 13th.

Reform is, after all, an assumption that the system is minimally flawed, or that the worst actions of an inherently oppressive system are only carried out by a few bad apples. Bad apples like the executioner cops that have drawn so much attention in recent years. Bad apples like Philadelphia’s recently outed nazi cop, Officer Ian Hans Lichtermann.

But when the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police announced it would follow in lockstep with the National Police Union’s endorsement of Donald Trump for president, a decision that was brought about on the national level by a three person panel that included Philadelphia’s Lodge 5 FOP President John McNesby (despite one faction of the police that protested their decision), it suggested something more than a few bad apples. John McNesby, of course, is the same man who publicly wrote off the scandal of that white supremacist, Blood and Honour affiliated cop as being just a guy with some tattoos.

“His campaign has been too divisive. It’s sexist, it’s racist, it’s bigotry. They even mock disabled people,” said the dissenting police minorities about Trump, suggesting that the very leaders of these particular forces — and at least the simple majority — can also be called “bad apples.”

Unlikely as it was for a third party candidate to win, though, we are just as likely as to balk at the opportunity for proposing or pursuing substantial alternatives — as was a problem among the anarchists during the socialist coup in Argentina. To do so would



necessitate early actions, at a moment like this when so many people are extremely disenchanted with the entirety of the political apparatus. So disenchanted that a dangerous political outsider has gained a significant platform to spout ignorance and empower an increasingly threatening white supremacist movement.

### MAKE THE GUILLOTINE RED AGAIN

The thing about Donald Trump is that, whether or not he won, white supremacist groups would feel justified in furthering their actions as a candidate that they largely identify with either gained political power or was shorted by a system that they think is rigged against him. They had already began before he was elected.

Recently, I picked up a daily paper that contained different stories covering white supremacist threats to interfere locally with democratically-controlled polling areas in support of trump, a Midwestern man who had previously flown a confederate flag publicly being accused of killing two cops, armed white militiamen compared to the Oklahoma City bomber energized by “Trump’s populist campaign,” preparing to “save America from ruin,” and a black church that was burned and adorned with “Vote Trump” graffiti. And then there was the vandalism and threats against marginalized peoples the day after the election.

That is not to say that Trump is a fascist, technically, as even white supremacists have sought to clarify on their message boards. I’ve heard him better described as walking the line between certain well-known Italian leaders like the racist/womanizing/media tycoon turned politician, Berlusconi, and the state and corporate merging Mussolini.

That is also not to say that we, as anarchists, don’t also oppose cops, governments and organized religions — but sharing the same enemy does not make us allies. We oppose such groups on entirely different grounds, in search of the broadest possible liberation, as opposed to their bigoted controls manifested as different cops, governments and religions imposed for the benefit of a select kind of person. The irreverent conflation that sharing tactics makes us equally “bad” — as has been suggested by local anarchists condemning any violence since conservatives bomb abortion clinics, for example — is also asinine when we consider the recent surge in grassroots activism, public rallies, counter protests, being elected to public office (i.e. Steve Smith), graffiti, arson, and more by these bigots.

### PARTY’S OVER, KILL THE LIGHTS

With this uptick in white supremacist activity, I am reminded of

the attempted assassination of Hitler during a speaking campaign that has been suggested would have greatly diminished the Third Reich and halted its rise to power.

A recent article by Apio Ludd in the zine My Own disputed the claim that killing was the most authoritarian act, suggesting that domestication (a totalizing slavery) was in fact far worse. While I mostly agree, I would take it one step further and say that killing can also be liberatory. Let us consider, for example, a woman killing her inescapably abusive spouse, as is too often the case for women incarcerated for violent offenses. Whether being beaten nearly to death, and/or losing all semblance of control over their own being on a regular basis, many women resort to these means for lack of other options (in a real, immediate sense) and liberate themselves from the fetters of their relationship. In many cases they are killing not even to live, but merely to survive.

In a wholly different example, we should recognize that we kill every day to survive, as plants and animals perish on an enormous daily scale to maintain us.

That doesn’t mean that every means is worth entertaining, or that every complacent participant in these oppressive systems is a target. But to not consider violence in its entirety would be naive. It is actually the inversion of the violence permitted by the state over us, moving it up the hierarchy instead of down, assassinating oppressors — the major consideration being measured in terms of its impact on our lives and the lives of those we care about.

To accept otherwise is to allow the impositions of church and state over our bodies and minds, and to ignore the rumblings of a potential civil war. White supremacists are arming themselves, and increasingly act out violently against marginalized peoples with little warning, and entirely without time to peacefully protest or engage in discussion.

This is a call for armed joy, for war on the existent with daggers drawn. It is a call for bravery among and solidarity with the most marginalized, most of whom are already fighting. It is a call for the more advantaged to physically oppose those hierarchies they feign fight, alongside those already doing that fighting — to not be passive because you don’t look like the current target, and engage in antifascist praxis. As such, it is an echo of the recent call from Redneck Revolt, with uncontrollable reverberations:

*This is a call to arms. And we need every single person who believes in real liberty prepared to mobilize to fight for it for all people. We will not allow our communities to be used as pawns for billionaires like Trump or political elites like Clinton. We will no longer just watch as white working people march lock step to the beat of the drums of White Supremacy. ★*



## [IDENTITY POLITICS continued]

people who are at the top of the social ladder, or at least closer than I am, should not take it upon themselves to take risky and confrontational action to stop or smash the people or structures that oppress. The first one is straight up wrong for starters (Ferguson, Oka, Bash Back!, Mujeres Libres, the list goes on), but is also a huge downer. You mean to tell me that me and my friends not only can't do certain things we want to do, but also that we don't even want to do them? It's like when someone tells you "you can't be here"; it's not true cause you ARE there, and it's also a buzz kill cause it means they want you to leave the spot you're hanging out in. It's better to say something like "I don't want you to be here," or better yet, "When you're here I feel a certain way", since that's actually true. I get that it's scarier because it involves expressing your feelings, without any justification but yourself, but you needed to get past that anyway.

If you're low-key racist or something, it makes sense that you'd want brown people to behave in a way that feels good to you, but this thing about top of the food chain type people also not being allowed to be bad is just too wholesome. Like, you want the rich white boys with lawyers and doctors for dads to not be awful either? They don't have to worry about nearly as much; in fact, they're the ones constantly being bombarded with requests to put their bodies/privileges/comfort on the line. You can't have it both ways. If some bosses or their kids want to break laws for the sake of some liberatory cause (or just for kicks honestly), more power to them -- with the caveat that they're smart about it, whatever that means for you're political ideology.

Special thanks to all the pacifists that don't want oppressed people or privileged people to get hurtful towards the powers that be. Your overwhelming compassion for, and faith in the conscience of, the rich and powerful is an example of perseverance and lack of critical thought I aspire to read about in dystopian fiction or from evil nobles in a video game. Don't let anyone tell you that you aren't setting the bar high.

Another thing that's messed up is how much people love to play up how victimized and powerless we are. This one got me extra upset because I mostly hear it from people who are oppressed in

a couple ways themselves, like damn, they really got you didn't they. I'm not saying we aren't oppressed cause we are, and it does suck. I'm out here with you, I know. Oppression definitely limits what your life can look like in all kinds of ways. How people go from acknowledging that to straight up identifying with disempowerment is beyond me. I'm not trying to say ignore the painful things going in you, that's important to feel. I'm just not interested in leveraging that as a long term strategy, I don't really want my credibility to be based in anything resembling pity or guilt. I'm not interested in appealing to the sensitive side of people and things that oppress me. Also looking back at the traditional behaviors of oppressors worldwide, it makes sense to predict that they still won't care. This kind of valorizing of victimhood won't defeat anyone, if only it was that easy. Still though, this line of thought doesn't even really seem to aim at defeating oppressors, which brings me to the next point.

A lot of you want to get accepted. Not everyone is saying that out loud, especially on the side that calls itself radical, but the way

people go about struggling, complaining, protesting, or just talking makes me think it's the case. When I see friends angry that there isn't a politician, celebrity, or billionaire that looks like or cares about them, I'm like, oh word, cause I thought you were against the system. Society isn't busted in my opinion, it's just really shitty. It's funny how people are too cool to want to change the system from the inside or

whatever (or ideally at all, smash it lol), but then seem upset that there aren't people on the inside changing it. I don't want to hear about a brown, non-binary, survivor, from the hood in political office unless it was a burglary. Fuck the whole government, remember? I'm not going to turn down more food stamps, but I won't make it my focus to get more of them either, that's not what I'm most pissed about, that's not where I'm going to put my energy.

If you don't see yourself in these critiques, if you aren't partially responsible for these frustrations, great. To everyone else, I hope this was illuminating about ways you'll annoy me when we next talk. To those who aren't sure hopefully mentioning these frustrations: privilege based rejection of violence, leaning on victimhood, and subtle assimilationist desires, will help us all talk about them more and choose sides in this messy battle to fight and/or join the power. ★

**INGREDIENTS**  
(Cleaned of fingerprints)

Good quality firelighters. The hi-energy individually sealed or 'gell' type are the best and also help prevent forensic traces on your clothes.

Lighter/matches




The cars of the wealthy classes, the corporations and the state are the fuel of our urban barricades and the flame of our international solidarity. Using simple, easy to reproduce methods we cause chaos, in an act of social war against the capitalist system and consumer culture. Class insurrection against the prison society.

**Instructions**

We light the product(s) properly and place in position 1 (directly on top of the wheel under the arch below the fuel tank/cap) for hi-energy individually sealed type, or position 2 (push into/through outer engine grill) for 'gell' type.

The flames will take some time to establish, giving you time to leave the area. Be aware of witnesses and your entrance and exit route.

Position 1 will result in a fuel tank explosion if product(s) are hi-energy. Position 2 will result in an engine fire which will also destroy the vehicle.



# FOR SOCIAL WAR NOW





# OVERCAST CINEMAS INTO THE NIGHT

Like a dollar I am circulating, but in some other universe. Dead moons all around like beached whales with nowhere to rest but on the shore. In this life I circulate and if the film plots are correct, this circulation means prison and dying and being born again as a bigger criminal. I give you power, a sudden ray of light. But I disappear. Dollars sink into lava.

Objects in a molten screen, speak to me!

A cloud is weighed down by this coat lining of dust, smudging its underbelly: I think, that's my shape, frozen above the port of Busan, waiting to circulate.

In a dream, my head is soaked in wine and being eaten. A psychiatrist is sucking out my eyes, brushing my wet hair. Everything that was heavy is sweet, what should be a dull tongue, so sharp, like tiny electrified needles. Pleasure in wakefulness. I wonder: does it -tongue- know me?

—needling a cloud

—capital offenses

—many days of stillness

I wonder if the sea knows to push me around.

I lay in the weather, inclement and fine, slowly laying traps. Tomorrow sinks the port of Samsung, the port of Hyundai, and of Lotte, and —

My carmine cloud tells you what to do, fingernails dyed with petals, waving conductor signals. Underneath the skin of this wish, a hundred others, waiting for work.

Sabotaged dollars lie dying in the street and no one offers them a thing.

In a power outage, someone flicks the lights of Goldman Sachs, on/off, on/off, on/off.

Codes for fun.

Everything a desert of codes.

They have planned around weather, turbines whirl all night just above the clouds. Planes that go around the earth speaking of empathy. And people that shoot them because of dead crops and dead children.

Our cinema is populated, it struggles for breath— and we, projectionists, trying to learn the off/off.

—

from *Museum of Expensive Things* (2016)

Oki Sogumi ★

## PHILADELPHIA: FRAGMENTS FROM LAST NIGHT'S ANTI-TRUMP MARCH

via *It's Going Down*

A few more things happened last night (11/9) then the cops and news are letting on. We were going to skip the march altogether until we

heard that people had burned flags and surrounded the cops who tried to make arrests. We never found the flag burners but we still had fun. Here's some moments from the night:

When we found the demonstration it was huge and full of energy. The march seemed to be mostly college kids, but not only. Cops couldn't keep track of the whole thing because of how big it was, especially in the tight North Philly streets.

Some young people ripped down some "VOTE NOV 8" and run off cackling, vanishing into the crowd.

Chants that "Philly hates Trump" are nice, others that mention "this is what democracy looks like" seem to miss the point.

Masked strangers ask each other if they want to walk together, a small black bloc comes together. Anti-Trump stickers and fireworks go up, people clap and smile.

No one is the peace police, but we're still reminded that doing graffiti is "not what we're here for" even though it's definitely part of what we're there for.

A Rite-Aid truck almost becomes the canvas for an anti-trump message but the artist is interrupted by a plainclothes cop, the cop in turn, is interrupted by some masked people. Everyone gets away unscathed, except the truck. "FUCK TR"

A bunch of the light columns on Broad St are redecorated with anti-police tags.

Stickers and fireworks run out and people who wanted some are let down. Those of us who brought too little are also let down, more stuff next time?

It's proposed that an American flag is burned but the bearers don't want to. A lot of people are here because they are upset Hillary Clinton lost, they don't seem critical of democracy or America or whatever.

A couple cop vehicles are tagged, surprisingly many people holler and clap. I guess anti-cop stuff is always in.

The march approaches the highway but police have formed a line in front of the ramp, after some chanting and an unfortunate firework we all leave toward city hall instead.

Fuck Trump!

Rebels To The Street! ★



**[TAGGING CONTINUED]** the southwest Philly area apparently randomly tagged the Homebrew store and some other stuff, including other gentrifying small businesses like Lil Pop Shop. We know this because someone went to a lot of trouble to compile extensive video footage from the area that showed the incidents happening. This video was sent by the property owners to the police, which makes sense because the police originated in the U.S. in order to protect white property and contested stolen territory. A reporter from West Philly Local who is friends with the property owner covered the story. Footage from the video was posted on the Facebook page "West Willy," where the kids were criminalized and ridiculed by West Willy members, which makes sense because West Willy is a Facebook group that allows gentrifiers of the less apologetic sort to collude and consolidate power in that neighborhood.

While this attack doesn't seem to have been politically motivated, we'd like to offer a perspective on why this very unpopular action actually makes sense.

If people are interested in stopping the extremely destructive and accelerating flow of gentrification in Philadelphia -- and this is an "if," I guess -- this can potentially happen at any number of stages along the way, and small businesses moving in is one of these stages. From what I've seen, halting gentrification is most likely during the stage in which small businesses are opening up in the area.

Small businesses tend to spread important and cutesy elements of the gentrifier culture (homebrewing, specialty ice cream, expensive pizza) into a new outpost for gentry residents. Without these outposts, gentrifiers will feel less at home. Small businesses are also usually less resilient to the demoralization and loss of clientele that ideally follow vandalism and other types of attacks. If they end up struggling financially or closing up shop, this signals to potential bigger developers that this is not a great zone for them, and yuppies will correctly find the neighborhood to be unsafe for them and feel less excited to move there.

For example, people (usually gentrifiers) often make fun of how new businesses are always "welcomed" to West Philly with some hostile graffiti at first, and say that it's just part of the process of adapting. For many developers, though, just knowing that this is the case will deter them from building or developing in West Philly, knowing that they couldn't retain a clientele at a business that was hated by and possibly a potential target of many people. While it's not clear why U3 Ventures recently decided to cancel their long-planned condo project at 4224 Baltimore Ave in West Philly, it is possible that the consistent attacks on the condos' neighbor business, Clarkville, in which U3 Ventures was also a partner, ultimately discouraged developers from building there.

Most people don't see attacking small businesses as a legitimate form of resistance to gentrification, possibly because it is not. Local government and corporations, i.e. the main initiators and backers of gentrification, provide open community meetings with developers as the legitimate channel through which people can voice opposition to a specific development project. But these meetings are not intended for actually listening to community members, especially if they are asking for the project to be stopped altogether. The meetings are designed to incorporate community input into a project that is already happening, with minimal possible disturbance to the project. Such projects are powered by financial backers, not community members who have no "value" to contribute. Only the most minimal content from community members, content that doesn't disturb the financial stakes of the project, will be incorporated into it.

Vandalism and other types of attack can potentially threaten the financial viability of the project, and thus will be taken more seriously by developers than the comments period of a community or legislative meeting. Moreover, they don't play into the games that those in power have laid out for us. This is always weird and scary for authorities and property holders. They worry it might be them next, but they can't know for sure; they can only retaliate by attempting to crush perceived attacks, both in order to punish transgressors and aggressively discourage anyone who might get it into their heads that this is a good idea that they can do too.

Many will flinch, though, at the idea of attacking small businesses. Aren't they kind of the little people too, just trying to make it out there in a corporate culture? Sort of, though they do own a business and don't necessarily treat their workers any better than large corporations do. But in a city like Philly, where tensions over gentrification are impossible to ignore, it's on everyone to try to actively resist gentrification on a broader scale. Philly Homebrew Outlet is definitely contributing to gentrification, and their response -- trying to send kids to jail over some paint on their property -- does not demonstrate any awareness of why people might be hostile to their presence in West Philly.

Moreover, if the kids who tagged the Homebrew Outlet were also white transplants to West Philly, as many commentators have assumed, what exactly is so problematic about them disrespecting a fellow gentrifier's store? Aren't white people being called on at this time to stand against racism in their own communities, and isn't attacking the mostly white gentrification of black neighborhoods one of the most relevant ways to act against white supremacy in Philadelphia? It seems to me that it's time for white people to move beyond having conversations with each other and forming even more organizations, and to take inspiration from vandalism and other attacks that try to discourage and ultimately

[8]stop the ongoing destruction of racialized populations. ★